

## The Relationship between Pregnant Women's Knowledge Level of Exclusive Breastfeeding and Success in Breastfeeding at Birem Bayeun Health Center, Birem Bayeun District, East Aceh Regency, Aceh Province

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### ABSTRACT

Exclusive breast milk is the best food for babies in the first six months of life because it contains complete nutrients and antibodies that can increase the baby's immunity. However, the coverage of exclusive breastfeeding has still not reached the expected target. One of the factors that affect the success of exclusive breastfeeding is the level of mother's knowledge about the benefits and importance of breastfeeding for the baby. To determine the relationship between the level of knowledge of mothers about exclusive breastfeeding and the success of breastfeeding in the working area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center, Birem Bayeun District, East Aceh Regency. This study is a quantitative research with an analytical approach using a cross sectional design. The population in this study is all mothers who have babies aged 0-6 months in the working area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center as many as 72 people. The sampling technique used the Slovin formula so that a sample of 42 respondents was obtained. Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire and analyzed using the Chi-Square statistical test with a 95% confidence level. Results: The results showed that most of the respondents had a good level of knowledge as many as 18 people (42.9%). Most mothers managed to give exclusive breastfeeding to their babies as many as 26 people (61.9%). The results of the Chi-Square test showed

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a p-value of 0.018 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Conclusion: There was a significant relationship between the level of maternal knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding and the success of breastfeeding in the working area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center, Birem Bayeun District, East Aceh Regency. It is hoped that health workers can increase education and counseling to pregnant and breastfeeding women about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding.

**Keywords:** Mother's Knowledge, Exclusive Breastfeeding, Breastfeeding

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## INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) has reviewed more than 3,000 studies showing that exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months is the most optimal period of time for exclusive breastfeeding. This is based on scientific evidence that exclusive breastfeeding covers the nutritional needs of the baby and the baby's growth is better. According to UNICEF, the average coverage of exclusively breastfed babies in the world is around 38% in 2019, WHO targets that by 2025 the number of exclusive breastfeeding at the age of the first 6 months of birth will increase by at least 50% (Haryono & Setia Ningsi, 2020).

Breast milk contains absorbent substances in the form of its own enzymes that will not interfere with enzymes in the intestines. Breastfeeding has several benefits for babies, including being able to provide a good life in the baby's growth and development, containing antibiotics that protect, increasing the baby's intelligence, avoiding allergies that usually arise due to the consumption of formula milk, babies feeling the mother's affection directly, and when they grow up, reducing the risk of developing hypertension, cholesterol, and overweight (Maria, 2021). Exclusive breast milk is breast milk that is given to babies and does not receive other food additives such as formula milk, orange juice, tea, honey, and water for the first 6 months of birth and continued until the age of 2 years. Exclusive breast milk given in the first 6 months can boost the immune system in the baby and is the best first food for the baby's early life. Breast milk contains all the nutrients

needed in the right amounts and provides antibodies or immune substances to help fight infections. Exclusive breastfeeding will ensure the optimal development of children's intelligence potential, because breast milk is an ideal nutrient with the right composition and is very suitable for the baby's needs, proper breastfeeding will be able to meet the needs of babies up to the age of 6 months without complementary foods (Astuti, 2020).

One of the factors that affect Exclusive Breastfeeding in babies up to the age of 6 months is the knowledge factor, the low level of Exclusive Breastfeeding is due to the lack of knowledge of mothers and families about the benefits of Exclusive Breastfeeding. Mothers who have good knowledge will behave well in fulfilling their baby's nutritional intake, so that mothers who have good knowledge of Exclusive Breastfeeding, mothers will give Exclusive Breastfeeding to their babies and conversely, mother's knowledge that can be less influenced by the promotion or advertising of formula milk products that affect mothers so that mothers are more interested in giving formula milk than giving exclusive breast milk to their babies. (Purwoastuti, 2021).

Data from the WHO (World Health Organization) in 2020 shows that in Africa the number of children aged 0-59 months who are undernourished is 17.8%, while in Southeast Asia it is 19.3%. Meanwhile, the coverage of exclusive breastfeeding for babies aged 0-6 months worldwide is only 41% (WHO, 2020). Based on the data profile from the Aceh Provincial Health Office in 2020, the number of babies who received exclusive breastfeeding was 59%, this coverage increased slightly compared to 2019 of 53%. The lowest coverage of exclusive breastfeeding is found in East Aceh Regency at 49.9% (Aceh Provincial Health Office, 2024).

The Birem Bayeun Health Center is located on Jl. Medan-Banda Aceh, Birem Bayeun District, East Aceh Regency, is a non-inpatient health facility that plays a role in counselling (Huda & Waluyo, 2022) and assistance in exclusive breastfeeding. Several studies have shown that maternal knowledge is an important factor that influences the success of exclusive breastfeeding, in addition to other variables such as attitudes, family support, and Early Breastfeeding Initiation (IMD) practices. However, data related to this relationship in the work area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center is still limited, so research needs to be carried out to reveal it. Based on this background, the researcher is interested in

conducting research entitled *The Relationship between Pregnant Women's Knowledge Level About Exclusive Breastfeeding and the Success of Breastfeeding at the Birem Bayeun Health Centre, Birem Bayeun District, East Aceh Regency, Aceh Province.*

## **METHOD**

This study is a quantitative research that is analytical using a cross-sectional design. Cross-sectional design is an observational approach used to study the relationship between independent variables (risk factors) and dependent variables (effects) by collecting data simultaneously at one time (Huda et al., 2025). Through this design, researchers can identify whether or not there is a relationship between variables in one measurement using a questionnaire (Huda et al., 2025) (Bungin, 2019; Sugiyono, 2019). This research was carried out in the working area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center, Birem Bayeun District, East Aceh Regency with ethical principles, Chairul Huda, S. U. (2018) and Huda, C. (2017). The time for the research was carried out from February to March 2026. The population in this study is all babies aged 0–6 months who are in the working area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center in the January 2026 period with a total of 72 people.

The sample in this study was mothers who had babies aged 0–6 months in the region. The sampling technique used the Slovin formula so that a total sample of 42 respondents was obtained. Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire that aimed to measure the level of mothers' knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding as well as the success of exclusive breastfeeding. The data obtained were then analyzed using descriptive analysis to describe the characteristics of the respondents, as well as bivariate analysis using the Chi-Square test to determine the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables with a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of this study were obtained from the collection of data on 42 respondents who were mothers who had babies aged 0–6 months in the working area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center. The data obtained were then analyzed descriptively to describe the characteristics of the

respondents, the level of knowledge of the mother about exclusive breastfeeding, and the success of exclusive breastfeeding.

### Distribution of Respondents by Age

**Table 1. of Distribution of Respondents by Age in the Working Area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center**

Mother's Age	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Mother's Age (Years)		
≤ 20 Years	6	14,3
20 - 35 Years	28	66,7
> 35 Years Old	8	19,0
Quantity	42	100%

Based on the table above, it can be seen that most of the respondents are in the age group of 20-35 years as many as 28 people (66.7%), while the least age group is mothers under 20 years old, namely 6 people (14.3%).

### Distribution of Mother's Knowledge Level About Exclusive Breastfeedin

**Table 2. Distribution of Mothers' Knowledge Levels About Exclusive Breastfeeding**

Knowledge Level	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Good	18	42,9
Enough	15	35,7
Less	9	21,4
Quantity	42	100%

Based on the table, it can be seen that most of the respondents have a good level of knowledge as many as 18 people (42.9%), followed by sufficient knowledge as many as 15 people (35.7%), and less knowledge as many as 9 people (21.4%).

### Distribution of Exclusive Breastfeeding Success

**Table 3. Exclusive Breastfeeding Success Distribution**

Exclusive Breastfeeding	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Successful	26	61,9
Didn't work	16	38,1
Quantity	42	100%

Based on the table above, most of the respondents managed to give

exclusive breastfeeding as many as 26 people (61.9%), while those who did not give exclusive breastfeeding were 16 people (38.1%).

### Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the mother's level of knowledge and the success of exclusive breastfeeding using the Chi-Square test with a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

**Table 4. of the Relationship of Mother's Level of Knowledge with Exclusive Breastfeeding Success**

Knowledge Level	Exclusive Breastfeeding		Total
	Works	Didn't work	
Good	15	3	18
Enough	8	7	15
Less	3	6	9
Quantity	26	16	42

Based on the table above, mothers with a good level of knowledge mostly managed to provide exclusive breastfeeding, namely as many as 15 people (83.3%). Meanwhile, in mothers with sufficient knowledge, there are 8 people who succeed and 7 people who do not succeed in giving exclusive breastfeeding. In the lack of knowledge group, most of the respondents did not succeed in providing exclusive breastfeeding, which was as many as 6 people. The results of the statistical test using Chi-Square showed a p-value = 0.018. Because the p-value < 0.05, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between the mother's level of knowledge and the success of exclusive breastfeeding in the working area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center.

### Discussion

Based on the results of the research conducted in the working area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center, it was obtained that the level of knowledge of the mother has a significant relationship with the success of exclusive breastfeeding. Of the 42 respondents studied, most mothers had a good level of knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding and the majority of them managed to provide exclusive breastfeeding to their babies. The results of bivariate analysis using the Chi-Square test showed a p-value of 0.018 which was smaller than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , so it can be concluded

that there is a significant relationship between the mother's level of knowledge and the success of exclusive breastfeeding.

Knowledge is one of the important factors that influence a person's behavior in making decisions, including in the practice of exclusive breastfeeding. Mothers who have a good knowledge of the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding tend to better understand the importance of breastfeeding without the addition of other foods or drinks during the first six months of a baby's life. Adequate knowledge also helps mothers understand the benefits of breast milk in supporting the growth and development of babies and increasing the body's resistance to various diseases. On the other hand, mothers with lower levels of knowledge tend to be more susceptible to inaccurate information, such as the notion that formula can replace breast milk or that babies need additional food before six months of age. This condition can cause exclusive breastfeeding practices not to be carried out optimally (Halimatussakdiah, 2025).

In addition to the knowledge factor, the success of exclusive breastfeeding is also influenced by various other factors such as family support, maternal health conditions, employment status, and the role of health workers. Therefore, increasing maternal knowledge through health counseling, breastfeeding counseling, and continuous education from health workers is needed to increase the success of exclusive breastfeeding programs in the community (Prastiwi, D. 2024). The results of the study also showed that most of the respondents had a good level of knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding. This indicates that some mothers have understood the importance of breastfeeding as the main source of nutrition for babies in the first six months of life. This knowledge can be obtained through various sources of information, such as health workers, mass media, and counseling activities carried out by health center officers. The better the mother's knowledge about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, the greater the likelihood of mothers giving exclusive breastfeeding to their babies.

On the other hand, the results of the study showed that most of the respondents managed to provide exclusive breastfeeding, although there were still some mothers who had not done so. This can be influenced by various factors such as limited knowledge, busy working mothers, environmental influences, and lack of support from family. In fact, exclusive breast milk has a very important role in supporting the growth

and development of babies because it contains complete nutrients and antibodies that can increase the baby's immunity to various diseases. Overall, the results of the analysis showed a significant relationship between the mother's level of knowledge and the success of exclusive breastfeeding. Mothers with good knowledge tend to better understand the benefits of exclusive breast milk and are more motivated to provide it optimally to their babies. The results of this study are in line with various previous studies that stated that maternal knowledge is one of the main factors influencing behavior in exclusive breastfeeding.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between the level of knowledge of the mother and the success of exclusive breastfeeding in the working area of the Birem Bayeun Health Center. Mothers with a good level of knowledge tend to be more successful at exclusive breastfeeding their babies. Therefore, increasing maternal knowledge through breastfeeding education, counselling, and support is essential to support the success of exclusive breastfeeding programs and improve the baby's health status.

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